

THE expedition to Norwich was a turning-point: it changed everything. Of the expedition itself I remember little except a general sense of well-being which seemed to mount and mount in me, ever seeking higher levels, like wine filling a glass. Ordinarily, the process of buying clothes irked me, for I was not vain of my appearance and had no reason to be. I never felt that it had much to do with me until the amusement caused by my looking so hot convinced me that it had. The idea that I was somehow bound up with what I looked like was a revelation to me and at first a very disturbing one. When Marian told me that one thing suited me and another didn't (she was never for a moment in doubt), when I realized that her main concern was for clothes that would look well rather than wear well, a new feeling was born in me whose sweetness I remember, though it died so quickly. I came back not only feeling it was glorious to be me, but intimately satisfying to look like me.

We lunched at the Maid's Head in Wensum Street, and this was a great occasion for me, for even when my father was alive it was held to be a great extravagance to go to a hotel: if we went out for a meal it was always to a restaurant.

We had started away from Brandham early and by lunch-time we had nearly finished our shopping. One by one the parcels were put into the carriage until the seat in front of us was covered with them. I could hardly believe that most of them were for me. 'Would you like to array yourself now,' Marian asked me, 'or would you rather wait till we get home?' I still remember the indecision that this question brought me; in the end, for the sake of prolonging anticipation, I said that I would wait. Hot as it must have been in Norwich – for the thermometer, when we visited it later in the day, still stood at eighty-three, and had been higher – I don't remember feeling the heat, for all my winter wear.

L.P.Hartley, *The Go-Between*, 1953